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SUBJECT: SERBIA ADOPTS KOSOVO ACTION PLAN

REF: 07 BELGRADE 1733

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) The Serbian Government on January 14 adopted a plan of official responses to a declaration of Kosovo independence. The government will not release the document to the public and no specifics of the plan are yet clear. Serbian officials, including the Foreign Minister, told us the plan did not require measures against Kosovo or countries which recognize Kosovo any harsher than have already been discussed publicly, such as economic and trade embargoes or downgrading diplomatic relations. End Summary.

GOVERNMENT PASSES "SECRET PLAN"

2. (U) In late 2007, the Kosovo Ministry solicited input from various ministries including Foreign Affairs and Defense with the aim of formulating a GOS "action plan" to react to Kosovo independence. According to a public statement, the GOS adopted a plan during a January 14 extraordinary cabinet session to "protect Serbia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the constitutional order in case of the unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence." Kosovo Minister Slobodan Samardzic told the press that the plan was "top secret" and GOS officials could not comment on the details.

OFFICIALS: NO SURPRISES

3. (SBU) Serbian officials have said the plan is no harsher than expected. Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic told the Ambassador, January 13, that it "would not upset [the United States] even if leaked." Advisor at the Kosovo Ministry, Stanko Blagojevic, told poloff January 15 that a "majority of [the plan's] content had already been disclosed," and that the text focused on "guiding principles" of Serbia's sovereignty rather than "precise measures" of how Serbia must react on Kosovo. He said that the text reflected a "compromise" between these principles and Serbia's economic and other national interests. Reuters cited a "government source" on January 15 as saying that "the plan contained a series of measures for each ministry, including preparations for a possible influx of refugees from the ethnic Serb minority" and called the plan "mostly posturing, a show of determination."

COMMENT

4. (SBU) Releasing news of a secret plan, while keeping the details under wraps, was the perfect follow on to the parliamentary resolution, passed in late December 2007 (reftel). Both demonstrate public leaders' acknowledgement of the importance of Kosovo, without publicly committing to a dramatic response. End Comment.

